DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 165 558 HE 010 794

TITLE The Effect of Collective Bargaining on Teacher Salaries. Issue Analysis. September 1978.
INSTITUTION Public Service Research Council, Vienna, Va.
PUB DATE Sep 78
NOTE 14p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Collective Bargaining; Comparative Analysis; Elementary Secondary Education; *Faculty Promotion; Higher Education; National Surveys; *Promotion (Occupational); *Teacher Salaries; *Teacher Strikes; Trend Analysis; *Unions
IDENTIFIERS Compensation (Remuneration)

ABSTRACT

Teacher salaries across the country were examined to determine whether collective bargaining is a prime determinant of the rate of increase in teacher salaries. It is suggested that many teachers join a union and seek collective bargaining in order to achieve higher pay. The percentage change in primary and secondary teacher salaries was compared between the 1969-70 and 1975-76 school years. Further comparisons were made between the 30 states that enacted compulsory teacher bargaining legislation before or during the period under consideration and the 19 states without such legislation. Collective bargaining was not found to have a major impact on the growth of teacher salaries. States without teacher collective bargaining legislation, which had a lower degree of actual bargaining, experienced growth in teacher compensation rates very similar to, and on the average higher than, those states with bargaining legislation. A recent study concluded that unionization has resulted in a negative impact on teacher salaries. At the collegiate level, a study has been conducted of 37 campuses that negotiated their initial collective bargaining agreement during the period between the 1971-72 and 1975-76 academic years. It is concluded that no significant impacts on salary, compensation, and promotions were associated with the adoption of collective bargaining by college and university faculty. At all levels, collective bargaining increases the likelihood of strikes, which disrupt the education process and entail a social cost. (SW)

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PUBLIC SERVICE RESEARCH COUNCIL

ISSUE ANALYSIS

September, 1978

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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THE EFFECT OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING ON TEACHER SALARIES

The last fifteen years have witnessed a marked growth in unionism and collective bargaining in the public sector. At the forefront of this movement have been the teacher unions. During this period, the National Education Association has evolved from a professional association that encompassed all professions in the education field to a teachers' union actively engaged in bargaining and the attendant strikes. At the same time, the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, has been one of the fastest growing organizations in the union movement.

This activity has not been limited to units of primary and secondary education. The nation's public colleges and universities have also been subject to intensified organizing efforts. The American Association of University Professors, like the NEA, has been in the process of evolving into a labor union. Higher education affiliates of the National Education Association and American Federation of Teachers are actively seeking new members and bargaining units at the collegiate level.

Why Organize?

Despite the rhetoric generally associated with union organizing campaigns, it can be commonly recognized that one of, if not the, prime motivations for joining a union and seeking collective bargaining is a desire on the part of the employee to improve his or her economic position -- in other words, to achieve higher pay. At the collegiate level, further motivations for unionization

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have been put forward. In addition to higher salaries, these include increased promotion rates into the higher professional ranks and a desire for salary and compensation "equity", a reduced salary "variation within and between academic ranks."[1] Union organizers would in the course of their campaign encourage such expectations.

It is reasonable to ask whether unionization and collective bargaining do indeed produce the desired and promised ends. Recognizing that collective bargaining increases the incidence of strikes, it may be further asked whether educators are warranted in adopting bargaining with its attendant disruptions in order to achieve higher pay and other benefits. A 1970 study stated: "There is no statistically significant positive effect of teacher organizations on salaries, once other variables such as income and urbanization are taken into account".[2] There is more recent evidence in support of this conclusion.

Primary and Secondary Education

An examination of teacher salaries across the country reinforces the conclusion that collective bargaining is not the prime determinant of the rate of increase in teacher salaries. This conclusion is based on a comparison of the percentage change in teacher salaries between the 1969-70 and 1975-76 school years.[3] Further comparisons were made between those states which enacted compulsory teacher bargaining legislation before or during the period under consideration and those states without such legislation. There were 30 states in the former category and 19 in the latter.

Both the mean and average change in teacher salaries over this period was 38%. Of the 30 states with bargaining legislation, 16, 53.3%, posted average salary changes below the mean/average figure; 13 states, 43.3%, were above it, while one was average. Among those states without teacher bargaining legislation, 11, 57.9%, were above the mean/average figure, 7 states, 36.8%, were below it, and one was average.

The average increase in teacher salaries in states without bargaining legislation was 40.5%. For states with legislation, the average change was

36.6%. This data further supports a conclusion that factors other than collective bargaining are the primary determinants of teacher salaries.

When these salary figures are examined in conjunction with the incidence of education strikes in those same states, the results are even more interesting.[4] The states without bargaining legislation, which were noted earlier to have posted higher average salary gains than states with legislation, averaged 11.7 strikes compared to an average of 36.2 strikes for those states with legislation. (Of the 223 strikes which occurred in the states without legislation, 144 took place in Ohio where 472 of 640 school districts bargain[5] in the absence of legislation.)

An examination of individual states illustrates that states without bargaining legislation realized teacher salary gains comparable to states with legislation, but without high strike activity. New York, which has a compulsory bargaining law, saw teacher salaries increase 56% with 94 strikes; Mississippi had a 54% increase in salaries and no strikes without teacher bargaining legislation. Michigan, with legislation, had a 53% increase and 247 strikes; Alabama, without legislation, saw teacher salaries increased by 52% and only two strikes. California, another state with legislation, also posted a 52% increase in salaries and experienced 74 strikes. Pennsylvania, which has legalized strikes, not surprisingly headed the list with 335 work stoppages in education. During the period under study, Pennsylvania teachers saw their salaries increase by 37%. Virginia, a state in which teacher bargaining has been declared unconstitutional, also realized a 37% increase in teacher salaries, but had no work stoppages.

The evidence supports the conclusion that collective bargaining does not have a major impact on the growth of teacher salaries. States without teacher collective bargaining legislation, and hence a lower degree of actual bargaining, experienced growth in teacher compensation rates remarkably similar to, and on average higher than, those states with bargaining legislation. In addition, the states with bargaining legislation experienced a greater incidence of strikes. The individual unionized teacher did not realize any gain that could not have been obtained in the absence of unionism and bargaining which entails

the additional cost of union dues. The consumer of the services of these unionized school districts, the students and their taxpayer/parents, were forced to endure more disruptions of the educational process and a lessening of citizen control.

A recent study not only discounted the influence of unionization on teacher salaries but reached an even more startling conclusion -- unionization resulted in a negative impact on teacher salaries.[6]

Dennis Zuelke and Lloyd Frohreich collected data from 50 randomly selected small and medium-sized school districts in Wisconsin. Teachers in Wisconsin have been covered by bargaining legislation since 1959. The authors found a rather surprising long-term effect of collective bargaining on the salaries of K-12 teachers in these Wisconsin school districts.

> "Our research indicates that collective negotiations have, in most cases, a significant negative effect on teacher salaries in small to intermediate sized districts in Wisconsin. This conclusion is surprising, given the length of time formal teacher-school board collective negotiations have been in existence in Wisconsin. In the short term, negotiations have been reported in a few previous research efforts to have an initial positive impact on teacher salaries. Our study may well have found the long-term effect where negotiations' positive influence on salaries has not only peaked and leveled off but is now on the decline."[7]

Higher Education

It has been shown that unionization and collective bargaining have no positive and, in some instances, a negative impact on teacher compensation in the K-12 educational system. We will now examine whether this pattern holds at the collegiate level.

William W. Brown and Courtenay C. Stone are, respectively, an Assistant Professor and an Associate Professor of Economics at California State University at Northridge. Their research examined the impact of collective bargaining on those previously stated reasons for unionization at the collegiate

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DESC:: Higher Education; Elementary Secondary Education; *Teacher Salaries; *Collective Bargaining; *Unions; *Faculty Promotion; *National Surveys; Trend Analysis; Comparative Analysis; *Promotion (Occupational); *Teacher Strikes

ID:: Compensation (Remuneration)

CH:: HE 010 794

PDAT:: Sep78

LEVEL:: 1 PAGE:: (For Level 3)

AUTH::

TITLE:: The Effect of Collective Bargaining on Teacher Salaries. Issue Analysis. September 1978.

INST:: BBB14040 Public Service Research Council, Vienna, Va

SPON::

CONT:: REPNO::

GR::

PUBTYPE:: R

NOTE::

AVAIL::

GEO:: U.S.; Virginia

GOV::

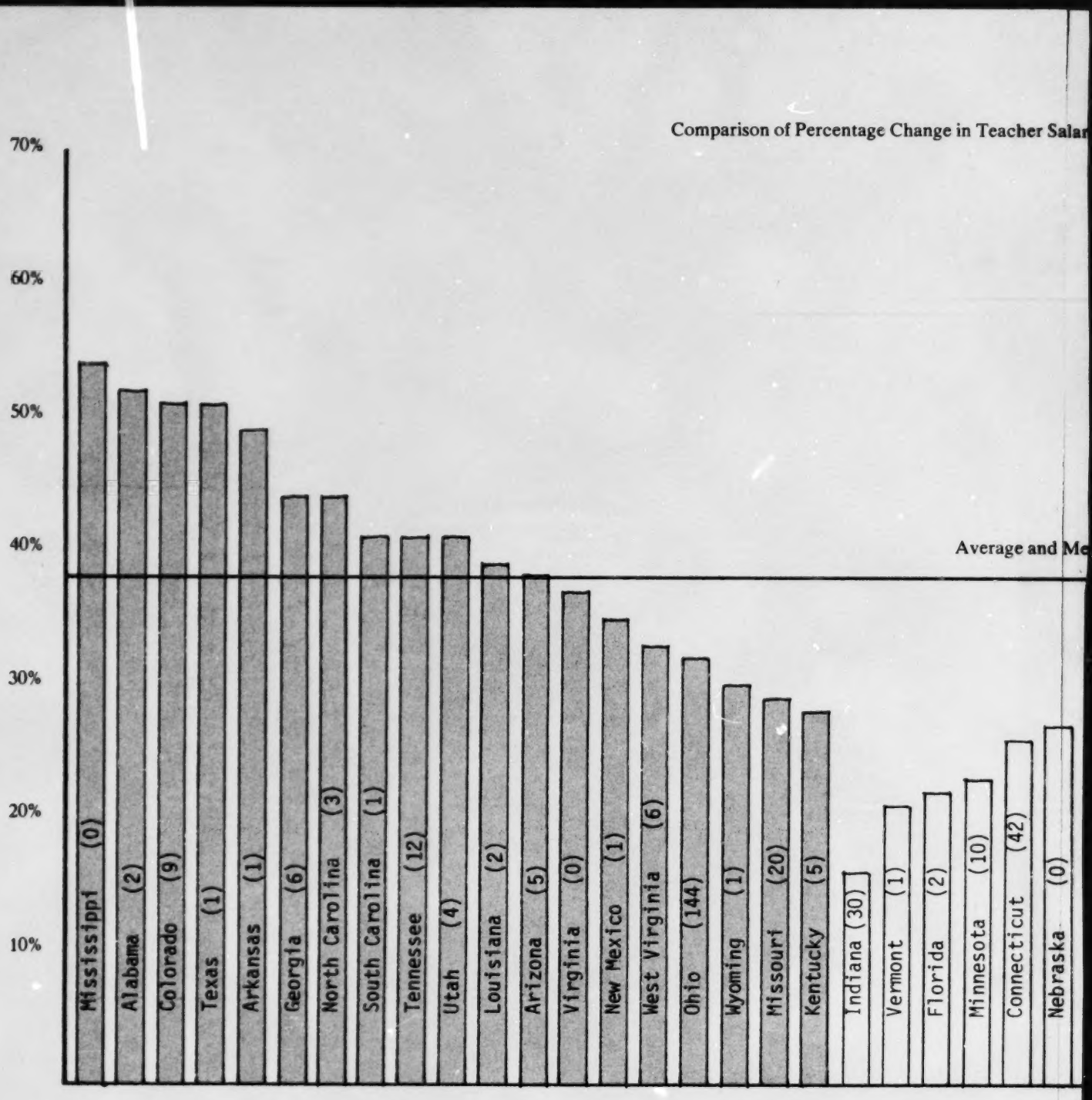
LANG::

JNL::

Percent Change in Teacher Salaries, 1969-70 Through 1975-76 School Years

Bargaining States		Non-Bargaining States	
Alaska	43%	Alabama	52%
California	52%	Arizona	38%
Connecticut	26%	Arkansas	49%
Delaware	34%	Colorado	51%
Florida	22%	Georgia	44%
Hawaii	54%	Illinois	n/a
Idaho	40%	Kentucky	28%
Indiana	16%	Louisiana	39%
Iowa	41%	Mississippi	54%
Kansas	37%	Missouri	29%
Maine	31%	New Mexico	35%
Maryland	38%	North Carolina	44%
Massachusetts	29%	Ohio	32%
Michigan	53%	South Carolina	41%
Minnesota	23%	Tennessee	41%
Montana	35%	Texas	51%
Nebraska	27%	Utah	41%
Nevada	31%	Virginia	37%
New Hampshire	30%	West Virginia	33%
New Jersey	40%	Wyoming	30%
New York	56%		
North Dakota	43%		
Oklahoma	34%		
Oregon	34%		
Pennsylvania	37%		
Rhode Island	50%		
South Dakota	39%		
Vermont	21%		
Washington	43%		
Wisconsin	40%		

SOURCE: Facts and Figures on Government Finance, Tax Foundation, Inc.



States without teacher bargaining legislation

States which enacted teacher bargaining legislation prior to or during period under consideration

Figure in parentheses represents number of education strikes from 1969 through 1975, inclusive.

ies Between the 1969-70 and 1975-76 School Years

an Change (38%)

Education Strikes, 1969 Through 1975

Bargaining States		Non-Bargaining States	
Alaska	7	Alabama	2
California	74	Arizona	5
Connecticut	42	Arkansas	1
Delaware	17	Colorado	9
Florida	2	Georgia	6
Hawaii	2	Illinois	145
Idaho	5	Kentucky	5
Indiana	30	Louisiana	2
Iowa	7	Mississippi	0
Kansas	2	Missouri	20
Maine	0	New Mexico	1
Maryland	9	North Carolina	3
Massachusetts	20	Ohio	144
Michigan	247	South Carolina	1
Minnesota	10	Tennessee	12
Montana	10	Texas	1
Nebraska	0	Utah	4
Nevada	2	Virginia	0
New Hampshire	7	West Virginia	6
New Jersey	72	Wyoming	1
New York	94		
North Dakota	1		
Oklahoma	1		
Oregon	2		
Pennsylvania	335		
Rhode Island	34		
South Dakota	0		
Vermont	1		
Washington	22		
Wisconsin	60		

SOURCE: Data collected by Bureau of Labor Statistics

level.[8] Their work received financial support from the Association of California State University Professors, the Bureau of Business Services and Research at CSUN and the Economics-Carthage Fund of the UCLA Foundation.

The study examined thirty-seven campuses that negotiated their initial collective bargaining agreement during the period between the 1971-72 and 1975-76 academic years. This approach provided data from both pre- and post-collective bargaining periods. The results might surprise staunch advocates of faculty bargaining.

Brown and Stone first examined the question of salary and compensation gains. They compared the rate of growth in salary and compensation for the thirty-seven organized campuses with the national average for the corresponding period. The conclusion was, "It would not appear that initiation of collective bargaining was generally accompanied by more rapid than average growth in salary and compensation."[9]

Next examined was the question of salary and compensation "equity". Brown and Stone state:

> "Though these demands are commonly interpreted as a means to increase membership among younger faculty, a consequence of successful union effort to increase 'equity' would be reduced salary and compensation variation within and between academic ranks. Our analysis shows, however, that collective bargaining was not accompanied by a significant reduction in interrank salary and compensation variation."[10]

Finally, the research examined the question of promotion into higher academic ranks, a desired goal since it brings increased salary and greater job security. Again, the effect of collective bargaining was found to be negligible. "(O)ur analysis suggests that unionization has not been accompanied by unusual growth in the upper ranks."[11]

After careful examination, the authors find that faculty members realized no apparent gain from unionization. "In general, there appear to be no significant impacts on salary, compensation and promotions associated with the adoption of collective bargaining by college and university faculty."[12]

Conclusion

The evidence suggests that, although the desire for increased salary is perhaps the prime motivation for seeking unionization and collective bargaining, this end result is not achieved. Collective bargaining brings with it a greater possibility of strikes, and these strikes, through the disruption of the education process, entail a social cost.

Various state legislatures have enacted compulsory collective bargaining legislation for teachers, having been convinced by proponents that this was the way to insure deserved salary gains for teachers and harmonious labor relations. Through the same arguments, teachers have been convinced to join unions.

However, the promised benefits have not materialized. Teachers have not realized any apparent salary gains that could not have also accrued in the absence of unionization and bargaining. The harmonious labor relations have also not materialized. Instead, we have seen a higher incidence of work stoppages.

The benefits of compulsory collective bargaining have not been enjoyed by educators or the public but rather by the teacher and faculty unions which, because of it, justify their existence.

FOOTNOTES

1. W. W. Brown and C. C. Stone, Academic Unions in Higher Education: Impacts on Faculty Salary, Compensation and Promotions, Economic Inquiry, Volume XV, pp 385-396, July, 1977.

2. H. Kasper, The Effects of Collective Bargaining on Public School Teachers' Salaries, Industrial and Labor Relations Review, Volume 24, pp 57-72, October, 1970.

3. Tax Foundation, Inc., Facts and Figures on Government Finance, New York New York, 1977, p 261. Data not available for Illinois.

4. Strike statistics are drawn from data collected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U. S. Department of Labor, and represent education strikes occurring from calendar year 1969 through calendar year 1975.

5. U. S. Bureau of the Census, Labor-Management Relations in State and Local Governments: 1975, Series GSS No. 81, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1977, p 51.

6. D. C. Zuelke and L. E. Frohreich, The Impact of Comprehensive Collective Negotiations on Teachers' Salaries: Some evidence from Wisconsin, Journal of Collective Negotiations in the Public Sector, Volume 6, pp 81-88, Spring, 1977.

7. Ibid p 86.

8. Brown and Stone, op. cit.

9. Ibid.p 388.

10. Ibid.p 390.

11. Ibid.p 392.

12. Ibid.p 396.

Additional References:

A. W. Smith, Have Collective Negotiations Increase Teachers' Salaries? Phi Delta Kappan, LIV, pp 268-270, December, 1972.

A. G. Balfour, More Evidence that Unions do not Achieve Higher Salaries for Teachers, Journal of Collective Negotiations in the Public Sector, Volume 2, pp 289-303, Fall, 1974.